

School District Replaces HP StoreOnce with ExaGrid for Superior Integration with Veeam

CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY



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Scott Leppelman
Senior Network Engineer

Customer Overview

Rio Rancho Public Schools is the third largest school district in New Mexico, consisting of three high schools, four middle schools, ten elementary schools, and a preschool. The Rio Rancho Public Schools district is dedicated to graduating each student with an educational foundation for success as a responsible, ethical contributor to society.

Excessive Wait Time for Data Rehydration with HP StoreOnce

The Rio Rancho Public Schools had been using HP StoreOnce with Veeam, and the results were less than ideal. Scott Leppelman, the senior network engineer for the school district, was frustrated by the myriad of issues and time-consuming backups and restores.

Leppelman noted, "We were running Veeam to back up all the virtual machines and had serious issues with meeting our backup and recovery windows. It could take anywhere between a day to a week to recover some of the data that we needed to store at a VM level, and if we were just doing a file-level restore, it would take hours upon hours to rehydrate that data in order to recover it. We were looking for a solution that was not only great for archival and retention purposes but also for quicker recovery so that we could increase our recovery time window."

ExaGrid Provides the Best Integration with Veeam

Rio Rancho uses Veeam Backup & Replication as its backup software, so it was important for the school district to choose a storage product that integrates well with Veeam. "We looked at Dell EMC Data Domain as well as other HP StoreOnce products and then came across ExaGrid. The real benefit of choosing ExaGrid was the Veeam integration — particularly the Veeam data mover — that ExaGrid has built into its product," Leppelman said.

Leppelman likes ExaGrid's built-in replication and the fact that he doesn't have to use Veeam to replicate. "ExaGrid's direct integration with Veeam was a major selling point for us. ExaGrid's performance with Veeam has been



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ExaGrid is Easy to Install and Maintain

Kris Martin, the school district's network specialist, was impressed with how easily the installation process went. "It was really quick and easy to get ExaGrid set up and installed. We had it racked in about ten minutes, and then called our ExaGrid customer support engineer who immediately started working with us to get set up. We were up and running within an hour or two. Having it accessible that quickly was awesome!"

"While our customer support engineer was installing updates to the ExaGrid appliances, we were able to work together to set up our backups in Veeam. It was nice to have that level of support as we were going through the installation and setup process, to make sure that we were understanding how the system worked. Getting it working with Veeam simultaneously was also very helpful."

Key Benefits:

- Backups that used to take up to two days now complete in 7 to 10 hours
- Quick installation: hardware racked in 10 minutes, system up and running in under two hours
- District would have needed 'racks and racks worth of storage' versus just two ExaGrid appliances
- 'Astounding' integration between ExaGrid and Veeam
- 'Unique' customer support model saves IT valuable time

EXAGRID

The ExaGrid system is easy to install and use and works seamlessly with all of the most frequently used backup applications, so an organization can seamlessly retain their investment in existing applications and processes.

Backup Window Significantly Reduced with ExaGrid

Leppelman and Martin are pleased with the school district's dedupe ratio, which in some cases is as high as 9:1. "We had about 150TBs compress into 15 or 20TBs, and couldn't have done that without deduplication. We would have needed racks and racks worth of storage as opposed to one or two ExaGrid appliances. We're getting really good ratios even on systems that have a lot of unique data, and it's absolutely critical for us to have a pretty decent dedupe ratio.

"Before ExaGrid, we used to have backups that ran into the week, and they would just run and run, and we would have to stop them to work on other things. That hasn't happened since we switched to ExaGrid. Our backups are usually finished within seven to ten hours on the fulls, whereas before it was two days in some cases. We've seen a significant change in our backup window," Leppelman said.

Exceptional Customer Support

Both Leppelman and Martin find valuable time savings in trusting ExaGrid's customer support team to alert them of any issues instead of managing all of the system maintenance themselves. "It's really nice knowing that there's always somebody looking at our system along with us. The fact that there's remote support that's automatic really helps, because we can't always maintain these systems all the time. Our ExaGrid customer support engineer is always looking out for what's best for our system and our environment. He lets us know when there's a new release out, asks if we want him to install new release, to which we always say, 'Yes, please,'" said Martin.

The ExaGrid system was designed to be easy to set up and maintain, and ExaGrid's industry-leading customer support team is staffed by trained, in-house engineers who are assigned to individual accounts. The system is fully supported, and was designed and manufactured for maximum uptime with redundant, hot-swappable components.

About ExaGrid

ExaGrid provides backup storage with a unique landing zone and scale-out architecture. The landing zone provides for the fastest backups, restores and instant VM recoveries. The scale-out architecture includes full appliances in a scalable GRID and provides for a fixed-length backup window as data grows, eliminating expensive forklift upgrades. Learn more at www.exagrid.com.

Leppelman added, "ExaGrid's customer support is pretty unique. With other vendors, we have to call in and get in a call queue, or wait for a call back. You never know who you're going to talk to; sometimes you get level one techs, sometimes you get level two techs. I can't think of any other product besides ExaGrid where we have a direct support representative that we can email or call, especially one so responsive. It's really rare in this industry to get that level of support, so it's extremely valuable for us, and it frees up a lot of our time."

ExaGrid and Veeam

The combination of ExaGrid's and Veeam's industry-leading virtual server data protection solutions allows customers to utilize Veeam Backup & Replication in VMware, vSphere, and Microsoft Hyper-V virtual environments on ExaGrid's disk-based backup system. This combination provides fast backups and efficient data storage as well as replication to an offsite location for disaster recovery. The ExaGrid system fully leverages Veeam Backup & Replication's built-in backup-to-disk capabilities and ExaGrid's zone-level data deduplication for additional data reduction (and cost reduction) over standard disk solutions. Customers can use Veeam Backup & Replication's built-in source-side deduplication in concert with ExaGrid's disk-based backup system with zone-level deduplication to further shrink backups.

ExaGrid-Veeam Combined Dedupe

Veeam uses the information from VMware and Hyper-V and provides deduplication on a "per-job" basis, finding the matching areas of all the virtual disks within a backup job and using metadata to reduce the overall footprint of the backup data. Veeam also has a "dedupe friendly" compression setting which further reduces the size of the Veeam backups in a way that allows the ExaGrid system to achieve further deduplication. This approach typically achieves a 2:1 deduplication ratio.

ExaGrid is architected from the ground up to protect virtualized environments and provide deduplication as backups are taken. ExaGrid will achieve a 3:1 up to 5:1 additional deduplication rate. The net result is a combined Veeam and ExaGrid deduplication rate of 6:1 upwards to 10:1, which greatly reduces the amount of disk storage required.

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